

Sometimes by [diamondpawprints](#)

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Summary:

Hopper had visited Joyce and the boys every day for the last year since it happened. He wasn't exactly sure when the dynamic of their relationship had changed, but he knew he wasn't going to let go.

Sometimes

Author's Note:

This has already been posted on tumblr, so some of you may have already read this... I just thought I would share the Jopper-love around a bit :-)

Nothing had happened. The day that everyone was dreading had arrived and nothing had happened. It was one year since the mysterious disappearance of Will Byers and everyone went about their daily lives, even Hopper. Then it dawned on him.

Today he wouldn't be seeing Joyce.

Every day for the last year, Hopper had visited Joyce and the boys after work at some point in the day. For the first few weeks, it was to check up on them. To make sure the boys were still there. To make sure Joyce was OK. If he didn't, no amount of drink would be able to send him to sleep.

After a particularly long visit, one month after the horror, he made his way to the door, Joyce following close behind him. He pulled the door open.

"Hopper?" The sound of her voice cut through the chilly air that rushed in. "You don't need to check up on us every day. I know you're busy."

He paused before turning around to face her, trying to hide the disappointment from his eyes. He smiled at her and she smiled a sad smile back before averting her gaze.

"Goodnight, Joyce." He said before walking out into the biting Winter

cold.

He had all intentions of not visiting them the next day. He kept reminding himself not to go over. He wasn't needed. He wasn't wanted. He felt numb all day and had to remind himself to turn left instead of right at the end of the road to go home. After a quick shower, he headed out onto his small balcony where his eyes glanced over to his toolbox sitting in the corner. If he didn't need to check on them, he could go over and repair that hole in the wall that had been left for a month. He knew Lonnie had patched it up, but he always noticed a slight draft every time he walked past it. Without hesitation, he picked up his toolbox and made his way to his car.

He knocked lightly on the front door and after a few moments, it opened. He couldn't help the rush of relief he felt when he saw her brown eyes peering out at him, her hair a little disheveled. She smiled at him, slight laughter dancing in her eyes for a brief second and he felt a warmth run through his veins. He held up his toolbox.

"Whoever nailed those planks of wood over the hole in your wall did a terrible job."

Joyce smiled again. "You better come in then." She stepped aside and as he made his way past her, he gently brushed her arm.

Six months later, he was still seeing them every day. Sometimes when he arrived, Joyce and the boys would be sitting down for dinner. He didn't need to knock anymore, he would just walk in and as he took his coat and boots off, Jonathan would start to put whatever they were having onto a plate for him. Joyce always made enough for four. They would all sit and share stories about the day's events. Jonathan and Will would argue over brotherly things and Hopper would tell them both to shut up and offer advice their father should be giving them. They would laugh together at a funny joke and the

sound of their laughter seemed like music to his ears. His eyes would meet hers over the mashed potatoes as they shared a silent moment together as the laughter faded away. Their gaze would be broken as Will kicked Jonathan under the table and they would end up in one of their fights that he and Joyce would have to referee.

Sometimes Hopper would get to theirs a little later and enjoy a steaming mug of cocoa with them all before the boys headed off to bed. "Night, Hop." They would say without a moments hesitation. Will once called him "Pa" in his sleepy haze as he made his way to bed and they all ignored it, but he couldn't ignore the wave of love that washed over him. He occasionally noticed the look Jonathan gave him and his mother as he followed Will to their rooms and Hopper would give him a reassuring smile. Once the boys had left them, he and Joyce would stay up talking about things, never mentioning the nightmare they had been through together. He was glad they never talked about it because he knew their places were bugged. Sometimes he and Joyce would sit in silence once the boys had made their way to bed, enjoying each other's company. Sometimes Joyce would fall asleep on his shoulder, her arm moving around his waist as she shifted in her sleep. His arm would always find its way around her and pull her a little closer each time she stirred. More often than not, the boys had woken in the morning to find them still entwined on the couch.

Sometimes Hopper would need to stay later at work so he wouldn't arrive until the late hours of the night. He would silently open the door to find Joyce asleep on the couch. He would instinctively check in on the boys. Will was always fast asleep with his bed sheets scrawled across the floor. Hopper would pick them up and tuck him back in. Jonathan was usually listening to his headphones and would give Hopper a smile and a "hey." He would then return to Joyce and watch her sleep for a few moments. He would take in her features, calm and relaxed in her dreamless sleep, wondering which boy had caused which worry line that stretched across her face. If her hair had fallen into her eyes, he carefully tucked it behind her ear, his fingers lingering delicately on her cheek. When she would start to shiver with the cold, he would try to wake her.

"Joyce," he would whisper as she would stir.

"Mmmmm, Hopper?" She would slur as she drifted in and out of sleep, reaching out for him, not knowing if he was actually there or not. Thinking that she dreamed about him made his heart flutter a little bit faster. He would reach out for her and easily scoop her up in his arms. Her head would lull against his chest as she gripped the front of his shirt. He had become accustomed to the way toward her bedroom and he would lay her down on her bed and pull the covers up to her chin. He was too much of a gentleman to get her undressed, so instead he would gently bend down and press a soft kiss to her forehead. A few times he thought he heard her whisper, "please stay," as he headed out the door, yet when he turned around, she was still sound asleep.

He wasn't too sure when the dynamic of their relationship had changed. It may have been as their glances across the mash potatoes lingered for a little bit longer each time. Or when they moved into each other's arms before falling asleep on the couch after a mug of steaming cocoa. Or when his lips started to butterfly kiss their way from her forehead down to her lips after he had tucked her into bed. Or when he walked into work one evening after grabbing a coffee and finding her hysterically shouting at one of his officers to contact him. His heart sank at the sight of her. She looked just like she had on that fateful night nearly seven months ago.

"Joyce?" His voice almost cracked as he set his coffee cup down.

"Oh Hopper. There you are." She ran over to him and grabbed his arms, her eyes red rimmed with tears, pleading with him. "It's the lights."

"Mrs Byers here went charging into your office, Chief. Not a care for anyone else. She's been shouting hysterically about her damn lights flickering. I told her its not police business-"

"Shut it, Powell," Hopper hissed, "of course it's police business."

"She's delusional, Chief."

Hopper couldn't contain himself and flung himself at Powell, forcing him against the wall.

"Don't you dare call Joy- Mrs Byers delusional, Officer." He growled.

"Hopper, please." Joyce put a hand on his back. "My lights, they've been flickering. I don't know what to do."

Hopper paused for a moment, anger coursing through his eyes as he glared at Powell. "You ever call her delusional again, I will break your arms. Understood?"

He didn't give Powell time to react as he turned to Joyce, put his hand on the small of her back and ushered her towards the door.

They sat in silence most of the way back to the Byers' household until Joyce's voice cut through the air.

"I don't care what others call me. I can fight my own battles."

Hopper glanced over at her, her eyes still red and her hair still windswept.

"I know you can." He sighed as he turned back to the road, pulling onto their driveway. "But I care what others call you." He felt her look at him. "What the-" he gasped as he came to a stop, seeing the lights flickering on and off in the house. "Where are the boys?"

"I, er, Will is at Mike's and Jonathan's with Nancy." The panic in her voice started to build again.

Hopper's eyes never left the house as they both got out of the car. "I want you to stay here." He ordered Joyce.

"What? No!" Joyce cried as they both moved towards the house. He spun towards her and gently grabbed her arms.

"Do as you're told."

She pushed his chest. "Don't you dare tell me what to do."

He gave a frustrated sigh. "Please, Joyce. I care too much about you for you to get hurt."

It had surprised him as much as it had her and they stared at each other for a long moment. Out the corner of his eye, he saw that the lights had stopped flickering and had gone out completely. He made his way to the front door without a word, Joyce following closely behind him. He drew his gun and a torch before opening the door.

"What if it's come back, Hop?" Joyce whispered.

"I'm sure there's a logical explanation for this." He tried to reassure her.

The house was completely silent as they moved around together.

"An explanation like what?"

"I dunno, Joyce. Have you paid your electricity bill?"

She scoffed, "Of course I have!"

"OK, OK. Where's your power box?" It hadn't felt like last time. There was no noise, no tension, no creepy monster trying to get through the wall.

Joyce showed him the box and as he slowly opened it and shone his torch light in, he was hit with a terrible smell. He looked down and saw a fried mouse with its teeth still around one of the cables.

"Jeez." Hopper said. "I'd hazard a guess to say this is why your lights were flickering." He turned around and saw Joyce had crumpled to the floor, her hands over her face, trying to hold back her sobs. Hopper immediately went to her and gathered her up in his arms, holding her as tightly as he possibly dared.

"I thought-" she cried in between sobs as she clung to him as though her life depended on it.

"Shhh, it's OK," he whispered, "I'm here." He slowly rubbed her back and ran his fingers through her hair, kissing the top of her head as she calmed down. She slowly began to loosen her grip on his shirt and she pulled back to look up at him.

"I'm sorry," she apologised, "for making you come out here because of my hysteria."

"Don't apologise." He said as he rested his forehead on hers. "Never apologise to me." They were so close, he could almost taste the salt in her tears. She moved forward.

"Jim." She muttered, making his heart skip a beat.

The front door swung open and in burst Will and Jonathan, calling for their mother. Joyce immediately pulled away and stood up, desperately wiping the tears from her eyes. Hopper got to his feet as Will and Jonathan entered, eyeing their mother and the Chief suspiciously.

"Mom, are you OK?" Jonathan asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine. The power's out." She said, motioning towards the box. The boys peered in and scrunched up their noses. "It's late. You boys should be off to bed."

"But Mom-" Will protested.

"No buts. Go on, both of you."

Will slunk into his bedroom and Jonathan gave his mother a quick hug.

"Are you sure you're OK?" He asked, looking over at Hopper.

"We're both fine." She reassured. "The lights were flickering, so I asked Hop over to see what was wrong." Realisation spread over her son's face.

"It's alright, Jonathan." Hopper reassured. "Everything's fine."

Jonathan smiled slightly and headed towards his room.

"I best be off." Hopper said, beginning to make his way towards the front door.

"Wait." Joyce's hand grabbed his arm and he turned to face her.
"Please stay."

Five months later and he was still visiting them every day. Rumours were starting to spread through the town after his confrontation with Powell. He was sick of the town rumours. *You don't get this in the city*, he thought as he drove back home from work in an angry mood, not knowing why he felt so pissed off. Nothing had happened. The day that everyone was dreading had arrived and nothing had happened. It was one year since the mysterious disappearance of Will Byers and everyone went about their daily lives, even Hopper. Then it dawned on him.

Today he wouldn't be seeing Joyce.

For the first time in a year.

He rounded a corner and cursed himself when he realised he was automatically making his way to see them. As he turned the car around, he remembered what she had said to him the night before as he left after dinner.

"Hopper, please don't visit tomorrow."

He nodded and left, disappointment written all over his face.

He couldn't understand why. Had he said or done something? Was

she planning on leaving town with the boys? Couldn't she cope with being in the same house that had been the scene of something terrifying exactly one year ago? He couldn't blame her.

He walked through his front door and opened the fridge, grabbing a beer. It fizzed as he opened it and took a sip, screwing up his face at the stale taste.

"Ugh, damnit." He hadn't had an alcoholic drink for about a year.

That evening, he drowned his sorrows pitifully with orange juice, laying on his stomach on the couch. His upset thoughts wondered to what would have happened those five months ago if the kids hadn't burst in on them. If he had just had the courage to sneak into her bedroom that night after she had asked him to stay and pressed his lips to hers as he lowered her onto the bed. Thoughts he had never dared to think before. He was just about to drift off to sleep when the phone rung, right next to his ear.

"Darnit!" He cursed as he picked it up, slurring his words. "What'd ya want?"

"Jim?" He couldn't mistake Joyce's upset voice and he was suddenly wide awake.

"Joyce?"

"I need you to come over. Please." She tried to keep the panic out of her voice.

"I'm on my way."

He drove as fast as he could to her, dumping his car in front of the house and breaking out into a run as he approached the door. It swung open and he stopped in front of Joyce.

"What's wrong?" The frantic tone in his voice evident. "Where are the boys?"

"They're asleep."

Hopper took a step towards her. "Joyce, tell me what's wrong."

There was a pause, she looked almost embarrassed.

"I, I, can't sleep." He looked at her puzzled as she continued. "They started last night."

"What started last night?" Concern bubbled up inside him as he searched her eyes for an answer, his hands automatically reaching for her arms.

"The nightmares," She whispered, "About the mons-"

Hopper did the only thing he could think of to stop her from saying the rest of that sentence. He kissed her. He pulled her out of the house as the door closed behind them, lips still locked. There was a moments hesitation as they broke apart and looked into each other's eyes, seeing the walls they had built over the years crumbling down. He closed the small distance between them and kissed her harder. Her arms wrapped tightly around him as he pulled her closer, a hand running through her hair. They naturally broke away, but he couldn't let her go just yet.

"Jim," she breathed.

He put his finger to his lips in a shushing gesture and motioned her to follow him. He took her hand tightly and lead her away from the house and their cars and into the woods as far as they could go without losing sight of the house. He stopped.

"I had to stop you saying what you were about to say." He said, a hand reaching out to caress her cheek. Her eyes fluttered closed.

"Every time I shut my eyes, I see the monster." Her eyes opened wide. "A year ago today, Hopper. Why are the nightmares plaguing me now?" A tear trickled down her cheek. Hopper wiped it away before pulling her into a tight hug. His heart skipped a beat as he held her close.

"You know they've bugged our houses and cars. You know we can never breathe a word of what happened to anyone, not even to each other. All they need is a reason to kill us, the boys-"

She nodded against his chest. "I know." She pulled back to look at him. "I never have nightmares when you're around."

He smiled and tucked a stray curl behind her ear. "Neither do I."

Their lips met for the third time that night as they started to explore each other slowly and gently. She felt so delicate in his strong arms as the kiss deepened further. His hands started to wander beneath the bottom of her shirt and as he lightly brushed her bare skin, she groaned into his mouth and he pulled away.

"Joyce." He murmured.

"You're not going to hurt me." She smiled before their bodies pressed together and he kissed her with a passion he had never felt for anyone. Before he knew it, he had walked her back against a tree, mouths and hands continually exploring each other. Her hands came up and started to unbutton his shirt. It was his turn to groan as her cold hands came into contact with his bare chest. He was about to tell her she was beautiful, about to confess something he hadn't dared to say out loud before when suddenly there was a blood curdling scream from the house.

"The boys." She cried as they both took off toward the sound, knowing they were about to live another nightmare.

Author's Note:

Hope you enjoyed it! This is a standalone at the moment. I have posted a second chapter on tumblr, but I wasn't too keen on it. If you want to check it out, my username is the same. Thanks for being awesome, Team Jopper!